

ART. XVII.—*Notes on a New Acacia from Victoria River,
Northern Territory.*

BY E. J. DUNN, F.G.S.

[With Plates XXIV. and XXV.].

(Read November 11th, 1915).

In the latter part of May, 1913, on a visit to Blunder Bay, about 10 miles up the Victoria River from its mouth, and in a gully called Gouty Gum Gully (Lat. $15^{\circ} 14' S.$, Long. $129^{\circ} 39' E.$), about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the anchorage I found an acacia remarkable for its beautiful foliage. The stems, of which three or four grow out of a woody knob, are round, less than one inch thick at their base, and grow to a height of 12 or 14 feet. They are quite white. The phyllodes, commonly known as leaves, hang vertically on the stem, are leathery, strongly veined, lobe-shaped and of olive green colour, with a bloom on them that gives them a silvery sheen in the sunshine. At the top of each shoot there is a spray 12 to 18 inches long, of light yellow acacia blossom. The flowers are spherical, large and sparsely arranged. They appear in May, and the seed pods mature in June, and are probably dry in the month of July.

At the base of the stem, the phyllodes attain to 17 inches or more in length, and they gradually become smaller as they ascend the stem. It is a superb foliage plant, and ranks among the most beautiful of all the acacias.

The first plant observed was found growing in poor sandy soil, on the side of a small watercourse; but their proper habitat is on the quartzite ridges that rise to a height of about 150 feet above sea level, 1 mile S. from the anchorage. Here these plants grow without soil in intensely hard bare quartzite rock, as shown in the photograph, the roots penetrating the cracks and fissures of the rock. Very few seed pods form, only one or two were noticed on any of the sprays, and on some there was not a single pod.

The photograph of the plant and the writer was taken by Mr. R. J. Winters, Geologist, of the Northern Territory Geological Survey, and kindly presented to me.

On my return to Melbourne, dried specimens of the phyllodes, flowers and pods were submitted to Mr. Maiden, F.L.S., Govern-



New Acacia.

Victoria River, Northern Territory.